

THE NEW MEXICAN EXPERIMENT IN VILLAGE REHABILITATION

by

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I

In the southwestern part of the United States live over 1-1/2 million people of Spanish mother tongue. The culture of those who live in the villages is in many respects more like that of 17th century Spain than modern America. Unable to compete with modern business and commercial agriculture they have lost most of their once large communal holdings of grazing land. Although many still own and cling to tiny plots of land and homes in the irrigated valleys, they are dependent upon outside wage labor. They are thus vulnerable in economic depressions and thrown upon public relief when no outside employment is available. At such times governmental relief agencies spend millions of dollars supporting them.

The El Pueblo Experiment in rehabilitation (see the four villages indicated on map, fig. 1) was launched in an effort to determine effective means of making these people independent. After almost five years of intensive farm and home supervision, the families are well on their way toward attaining this objective. From a negligible amount of canned, stored and dried foods they have increased their annual production and preservation of food to an average of 310 quarts canned and 336 pounds dried and stored per family for winter use. In addition they have built up a livestock inventory which will furnish them some cash income. Their serious health and nutrition needs and deficiencies have been cared for and their level of living has been materially changed.

As a result of the progress so far made, the following tentative conclusions can be made:

I. It is Necessary to Know the Conditions, Especially the Felt Needs of the People.

Studies of the local conditions should be made to establish bench marks and determine the most strategic points to stress. Such studies assist the supervisors to relate felt needs to desired changes. If the people are found to have syphilis or intestinal worms as has been found to be true in other villages, it may be best, as a first step, to care for these ailments. At El Pueblo the people were required to dig through 15 feet of solid rock to get pure water which they do not appreciate. The digging of these wells might have been postponed. In any case it is the felt needs that are important. The people must be led to want that which is indicated and to fear disease. Thus they must want pure blood, disease-free intestines and pure water. They must fear their opposites and know that they have them. The school children did not want to drink the ditch water when through a microscope they saw the "funny little worms" in samples of it. All aspects of a program must be related to felt needs.

II. Well Worked Out Remedies for These Needs Must be Evolved and Carried Out.

1. The comprehensive approach demonstrated its superiority over the piece-meal method of rehabilitation and extension. The well planned program which helps the people satisfy their own needs is like a chain with no weak links. It recognizes that higher incomes are not enough and that it is easier for healthy than for sick people to increase their incomes. The better whole man is the aim.

¹Data furnished by Julia Martinez including her own experiences as home supervisor at El Pueblo were invaluable for the report. The senior author wrote the report which was revised and edited by the junior author who was farm supervisor from 1933 to 1941 at El Pueblo. The authors are also indebted to Glen Leonard who, with the senior author, wrote the report on El Cerrito, mentioned in the text as having been made to assist in the development of projects such as that of El Pueblo.

2. Changes in bureaucratic regulations which will not permit the supervisor to make good that which he promises are the greatest enemies of constructive work. Frequent changes in procedures and objectives lead to frustration. Thus one supervisor could not gain the confidence of the people because a change in regulations from Washington prevented him from providing employment which his predecessor had promised. Villagers are more likely to think in terms of personalities than in terms of principles, regulations and agencies. They do not understand such things. They thought that if the supervisor was not to blame he would get what was promised them. The changes in procedure undermined the status of the supervisor in the community.

3. An over-all regional plan which will coordinate the agencies and make them responsible to local needs is necessary. In the El Pueblo experiment differences were kept at a minimum because of sympathetic relationships between the representatives of the various agencies. However, more progress would have been made in rehabilitation had there been less chance for agencies to develop contradictory plans for farms and families.

III. Concerning the Introduction of the Remedies the Following May be Said:

1. The superiority of the village-community approach as compared with the individual family approach was demonstrated. Good supervisors use natural groupings. Just as a skilled driver automatically reaches for the "handle" so the good supervisor makes use of the systems of relations of the people. He creates needed "handles." The village-community approach gives him an effective organism with which to work.

2. Supervisors must work within the social structure as they find it. They must recognize that the old people and the priests can make or break the program. Care must be taken not to furnish the cause or excuse for the flaring up of an old feud. Rather, various factions must find it so advantageous to cooperate so that they want to work together and finally realize that "Old Sanchez and his family are not so terrible after all." Getting the right combinations of villages and families for the large cooperative may be more important than finding the best land for the families to graze their stock cooperatively.

3. Practices which require only slight changes in habits should be initiated first, other things being equal. Thus these people should be taught modern dehydrating and drying practices before they learn to can sauerkraut. They have dried some food for generations; they have not eaten and do not like sauerkraut.

4. Rehabilitation supervisors and extension workers should allow their program to unfold gradually as needs and desires of the people dictate. To push too many separate programs at one time may lead to confusion. The people should be prepared for developments which are in the offing. Using the baseball analogy, one supervisor said: "It is better to let them know who is at the plate, who is next upon the bench, and who is in the hole than to try to make them remember the whole batting line up."

5. Supervisors who work with these people must allay suspicions and fears which have accumulated through decades of mistreatment by patrons among their own people and shrewd Anglos and their agencies. To accomplish this, compulsion has little place. Friendly understanding and patience coupled with competence are qualifications of the good supervisor. The use of the grant program as a "big stick" is not as important as praise and sympathetic assistance. Of course, a knowledge of the Spanish language is absolutely essential.

6. The rehabilitation supervisor or extension worker must get across to the people the over-all objectives of the program. He must not allow them to make him a patron. Also he must avoid allowing himself to be made a *Político*. Instead, he must establish himself as a skilled professional worker. This means, of course, that he must be more than a skilled agricultural or home management technician. He must understand the culture and the people. Just as genuine sympathy may give a good doctor a "bedside manner" which adds to his competence and skill as a physician, there is no reason why the understanding rehabilitation supervisor or extension worker should not be what the natives call *simpático*. If he is not, his program will not get very far.

7. The "guinea pig" psychology which a constant stream of curious and often unsympathetic tourists may produce for such a village should be avoided.

II SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

The El Pueblo experiment in rehabilitation, conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture, is the first attempt at village-wide extension and rehabilitation work carried on among the Spanish-speaking villages in the United States. The lessons learned from this experiment are now guiding the development of a wide program aimed at the rehabilitation of the hundreds of dependent Spanish-speaking villages of the Southwest, particularly those in Central and Northern New Mexico. (See Fig. 1.) Seldom can the results of a single ex-

periment have as wide application as those of the El Pueblo experiment. Because the people of the Spanish-speaking villages have retained many common traits of the original cultural pattern, a program which is feasible for one village will, within limits, be applicable in the different localities of Southwestern United States and even in the Spanish-speaking countries to the South. In this report the attainments of and lessons learned from the Project are evaluated in terms of their applicability for the region and for Latin America generally.

III NEED FOR THE PROGRAM

The Spanish-speaking villagers of the Southwest are among the poorest people in America. Disease ridden, underfed, poorly educated and dependent, they have been called America's "Forgotten People," or the "Step Children of a Nation."²

People Were Impoverished Because They Lost the Land. How the people gradually lost their rights to the use of the large grazing already made available to them in the form of Spanish and Mexican land grants has been told elsewhere.³ The conspicuous role the Anglo has played in the changed ownership of grazing lands which were granted by the Spanish and Mexican governments has had its influence on Anglo-Spanish American relationships.⁴

A mortgage or lien is seldom found on one of the tracts of irrigated land. A villager may mortgage or sell patented land on the mesa, but only the most pressing needs will force a family to risk losing its home and holdings in the valley. Thus in El Pueblo the original investigator reported that "as a result of many of their neighbors and acquaintances having signed real estate mortgages or entered into business negotiations through which they have eventually had to forfeit their land, the people are very skeptical about signing anything that has the appearance of a legal paper. They have learned that there is often a disguised joker in fine print concealed somewhere in

² George Sanchez, *Forgotten People*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1940.

³ Olen Leonard, *Role of the Land Grant in the Social Organization and Social Processes of a Spanish-American Village in New Mexico*, Louisiana State University PhD Dissertation, Baton Rouge, 1943. *Notes on Community-Owned Land Grants in New Mexico*, Soil Conservation Service, USDA, Regional Bulletin No. 48, Conservation Economics Series No. 21, Aug. 1937. See also Olen Leonard and Charles P. Loomis, *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community*, El Cerrito, New Mexico, Rural Life Studies: 1, USDA, BAE, November 1941, which states that:

El Cerrito and El Pueblo are part of an early Spanish grant that contained over 400,000 acres. In 1901 the Court of Private Land Claims denied these people all but a little more than 5,000 acres. Not only did the people lose their land in this case, but also much of their tangible property went for lawyers' fees to plead their case. Another local case, and one typical of the area is the Anton Chico Grant which borders the village of El Cerrito. Part of this grant is being purchased by the Government as a part of the El Pueblo rehabilitation program, this community having lost all grant lands once available to it.

The Anton Chico Grant was originally made to a community of 36 persons by the Mexican Government in 1822. As confirmed by the United States Government in 1860 it contained 278,000 acres. At the present time there are 700 descendants and heirs of the original grantees. The grant is owned in community by the heirs and is administered by a Grant Board of 5 persons elected by them. Land contained within the grant is subject to the regular property taxes of the State of New Mexico. At a very early date delinquency in payment of taxes became very serious and now only 63,000 acres are available for community use by original owners.

⁴ For an analysis of ethnic cleavages see Charles P. Loomis "Ethnic Cleavages in the Southwest," *Sociometry*, Vol. VI, No. 1, May, 1943.

the most innocent appearing paper. Their land is not something to trade on--it is a home and a living; and they realize their land is their only asset, as chattel goods which might serve as security are, in most instances, negligible."

While they were losing their grazing lands they were furnishing much of the labor required to build the railroads of the Southwest, work the mines and shelters, and man the farms and ranches of the Mountain and Plains states.⁵ When this employment disappeared during the depression the Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided the first straw at which the people could grasp. Shortly after its initiation villagers filled the county offices asking for work, clothing and food.

Bare Subsistence is Their Lot. In 1938, before the rehabilitation program began, 53 families with able-bodied heads earned an average of \$135 in cash most of which came from WPA and only 11 per cent from private employment. Unfortunately, these incomes give little clue as to the level of living because families must always sacrifice home production of food in order to earn cash when they work outside the village. However, before the government rehabilitation program began home produced food did not constitute a large portion of the total income in El Pueblo. At the inception of the program canning as a means of preserving food was practically non-existent. Some squash, peaches and apples were dried when available. The people themselves had very few trees, and few gardens were planted. On the small irrigated units, they had continued to produce corn, wheat, oats and a little alfalfa. They had not undertaken intensive agriculture.

It is obvious from Fig. 3, indicating the lack of home production for El Cerrito, that any rehabilitation program for such families must concentrate upon improving production and preservation of food. This was the case in El Pueblo. Fortunately, the original customary diet of chile beans, and tortillas with some little fruit and other vegetables and meat, although not amply available when the program began, contains many of the necessary protective elements.

Many practices of the early settlers who came to the area during the early part of the 18th century are still present. When the project started in 1938 in El Pueblo some grain was threshed by flail and some corn was ground by use of the metate. Of course most people still use the *orno* or outside bake oven.

The 50 families who were considered for the program in 1939 owned an average of 5.7 acres each of irrigated land. Twenty-two of these families owned an average of 20 acres of dry crop land and 26 owned an average of 161 acres of mesa land. The average family owned 1.8 horses, 1.8 cows, and 11.4 chickens. Among the families considered in the program in 1939 only a total of 43 sheep and goats and 19 hogs were owned.

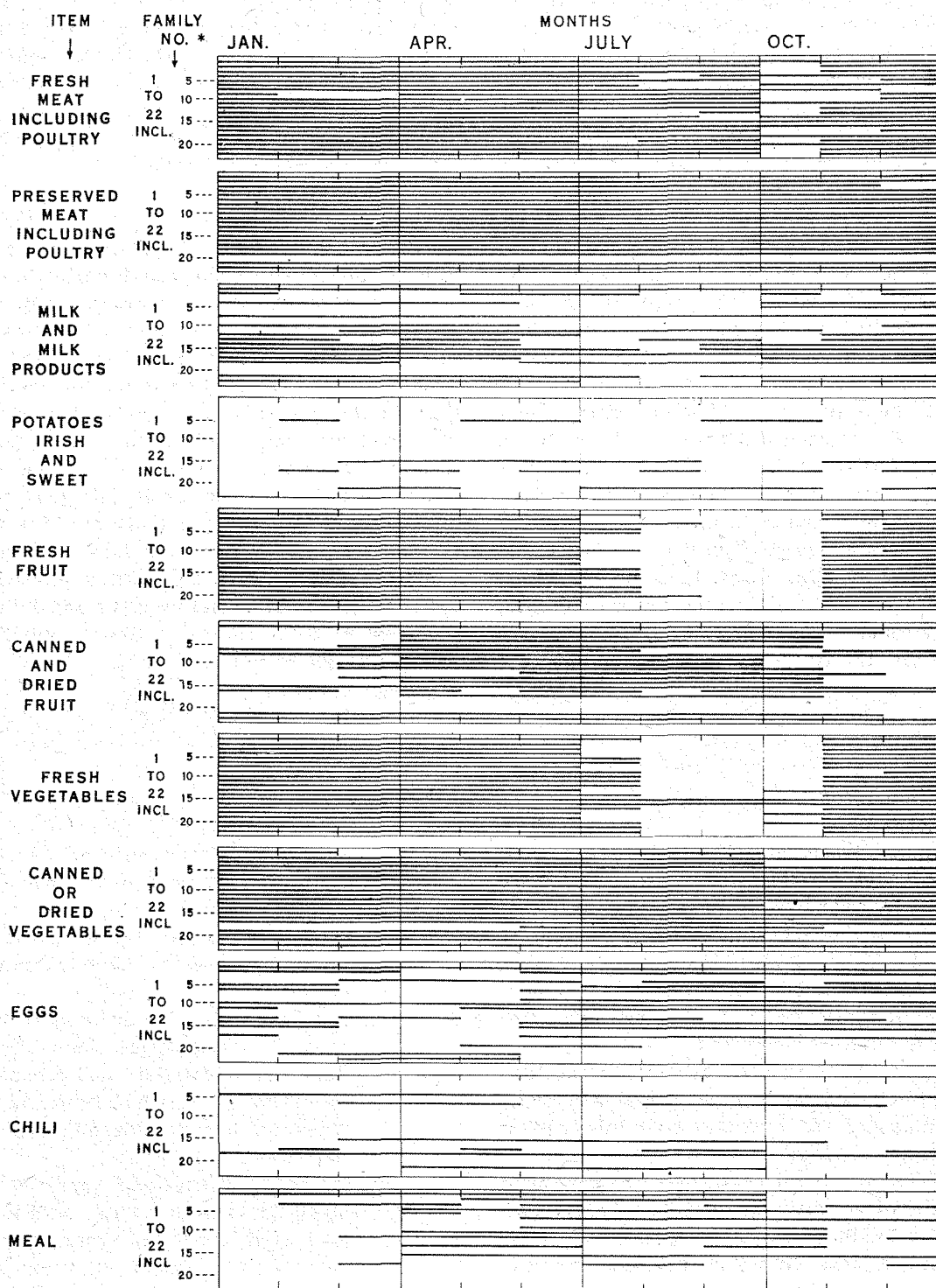
Some truck farmers in other parts of the county make a living from such small acreages and inventories. The senior author once described the plight of the New Mexican villages to a group of expert Pennsylvania Amish farmers for whom he was working as a hired hand with the express purpose of learning how to farm. The Amish were not hesitant in responding. They were unanimous in their belief that they themselves could easily make a living on 5 acres of good land. They thought only ungodly and lazy people would take relief while owning 5 acres of irrigated land. Of course, these Amish did not realize that while their own forefathers were developing an intensive peasant agriculture in Western Germany and Switzerland, the ancestors of the Spanish-speaking people of New Mexico were herding cattle or sheep many miles from markets. The Spanish-Americans are seldom intensive farmers and they do not have the markets which the Amish have. Other things being equal they prefer to raise livestock as have their forefathers for generations. These characteristics will be enlarged upon later in the report.

Problems in Diets, Health, and Sanitation. Recent investigation in the health and nutrition of the Spanish-American villagers prove that, although they are located where an invigorating, healthy climate prevails, they are among the most disease ridden

⁵ *Village Dependence on Migratory Labor in the Upper Rio Grande Area*, Soil Conservation Service, Southwest Region, USDA, Regional Bul. No. 47, Conservation Economics, Series No. 20 (July 1937). See also other publications of this latter series. See also Charles P. Loomis and Olen Leonard, *Standards of Living in an Indian-Mexican Village and on a Reclamation Project*, USDA Social Research Report XIV, August 1938. Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican Labor in the United States*, University of California Press, Berkeley. See whole series. For more recent data see Charles P. Loomis, *Wartime Migration from the Rural Spanish-Speaking Villages of New Mexico*, *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 7, No. iv, Dec. 1942, *Skilled Spanish-American War Industry Workers from New Mexico*, *Applied Anthropology*, Vol. 2, No. 1.

Figure 3

MONTHS IN WHICH PRODUCED FOOD AND FUEL ITEMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES, EL CERRITO, NEW MEXICO, 1940



SOME LARD, FUEL, AND SOAP AVAILABLE ALL MONTHS FOR ALL FAMILIES.

*FAMILY NO. 7 NOT INCLUDED, DATA NOT AVAILABLE.

people in the nation. In one community not far from El Pueblo, tonsillitis among children and eye disease and arthritis among adults was found among 40 per cent and dental caries among 90 per cent of the people including both children and adults alike. A diet high in carbohydrates, somewhat high in fats, distinctly low in protein had resulted in reduced blood content of hemoglobin, the oxygen carrier of the blood.

It was further found that the activities of children walking to schools and playing at recess created such a tissue deficit of oxygen that the remainder of the time in school was required to make it up. Rickets and other dietary diseases were prevalent, the state of health of the people was so poor and medical facilities so far beyond their reach both geographically and economically that diseases which in the general population are seldom fatal are often fatal among these people.⁶ Thus in a village near El Pueblo measles caused 5 deaths in the winter of 1940. No intensive study of health conditions was made in El Pueblo but after the rehabilitation work had started Wasserman tests were administered to 97 persons with positive reactions for 8. Syphilis is a disease of long standing among these people. Malnutrition, tuberculosis and dysentery were common. When the project began in El Pueblo, the doors and windows in all but two houses had no screens for

fly protection, the source of drinking water was contaminated, the irrigating ditch, and all privies were of the open pit variety, some of which were close to the water that was drunk. Medical care with the exception of vaccinations by the County Public Health Service was negligible. No family could afford to have the nearest doctor who lived 30 miles away pay visits in cases of emergency and few went to the offices of the doctors or dentists.

Need for a Different Program. When the experiment in rehabilitation was begun in the El Pueblo community the United States Department of Agriculture was attempting to rehabilitate families in the country as a whole through a supervised loan program. Supervisors assisted the individual families to manage their homes and farms so that the loans they received for rehabilitation purposes could be paid back to the government. Grants which were not to be repaid were made to help the needier families at a stage where they would be good risks for loans. Individual families, not whole villages, were approached. Scattered low income families who were not too poor to become good risks were the typical rehabilitation clients. The program missed most of the poor non-commercial farmers and did not make the most of those forces in the community which can be utilized in rehabilitation.

IV OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

Main Program Objectives. The main program objectives in the experiment were two: (1) To make the people independent of relief and outside labor and (2) to determine techniques for accomplishing this objective. It was decided that the village community approach would be tried out and techniques for its general application to the poorest non-commercial farm families developed.

Individual Project Objectives. After the rehabilitation supervisors had studied the social and economic conditions of the area they stated their plans and objectives as follows:

1. Improve health conditions and sanitation facilities in the community by constructing sanitary toilets, digging group wells for a safe supply of drinking water, screening the homes for fly protection,

setting up a group medical service, providing for vaccination and inoculation for small pox and typhoid, and organizing clinics run by a registered nurse, for prenatal, preschool, baby and motherhood clinics.

2. Improve living conditions in the way of adequate living space, including proper light and ventilation, and proper storage space for food and clothing, an adequate supply of home-produced foods, and better diets.
3. Increased production from farm and livestock through providing additional pasture land, revising cropping plans and cultivation methods, with emphasis on production for home use.

⁶Michael Pijoan, *Food Availability and Social Function*, The New Mexico Quarterly Review, Vol. XII, No. 4, Nov. 1942.

4. Develop community and cooperative enterprises such as water facilities program to improve irrigation facilities, river control work, cooperatively owned machinery and livestock, cooperative buying, and construction of community center for cultural and educational improvements.

These plans were drawn up after an intensive analysis of economic and social conditions in the village had been made. Accurate records were kept of the accomplishments of the families in terms of production, consumption of home produced food, incomes and expenditures. Unfortunately the nutrition, health and sanitation phases of the program had to be started without having a bench mark set for health because facilities for a study which would have accomplished this were not available at the time. This makes it difficult to measure the extent to which health objectives had been attained.

Income Goals. Perhaps an over-simplified but generally true statement of the objectives of the project were as follows: To arrange so that each family would receive orientation and farm income sufficient to make it independent of outside relief and

outside employment. For the families of El Pueblo, which averaged 5.4 members living in each home, this income in normal times would average \$500 annually, at least \$300 of which would be in the form of farm produced food which the family could consume throughout the year and about \$200 cash from the sale of livestock and a few crops. The health, sanitation, food preservation, home improvement, and nutrition programs were calculated to improve living levels within this income; the crop and livestock program was calculated to make the income available. As no more irrigated farming land was to be had, it is obvious that if dependable additional cash farm income were to be made available, some means had to be found whereby grazing land could be returned to the villagers and this re-stocked. Since for the 50 families in the program the average cash income from livestock and farm products was only \$16 per family with only 8 families reporting such incomes the reader can appreciate the herculean job which confronted the supervisors in raising this income to \$200. The families were dependent upon relief and did not produce a large part of their own food when the project started.

V ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN LIGHT OF THE LIMITATIONS

To what extent have these objectives been attained? This is difficult to answer because the war has increased the incomes of the people thus introducing an extraneous factor into the experiment. Nevertheless, certain objective accomplishments can be described.

1. *Increased Production of Food and Crops.* The most conspicuous results were manifest in the production and conservation of food for home use. From a negligible amount (an average of only 6 quarts per family) of canned food preserved by the families in 1938, with the beginning of the program it rose to an average to 180 quarts in 1939; 226 quarts in 1940; 252 quarts in 1941 and 310 quarts in 1942. The significance of this accomplishment will be even more appreciated when it is recognized that entirely new habits had to be formed -- new methods, new implements, and fuller use of time for productive

work, the latter a considerable innovation for people conditioned to the "Mañana" philosophy. Only two families had ever operated pressure cookers when the program started and all had to be provided with and taught to use them. Canning as a means of food preservation was not nearly so important in the cultural traditions of the people as drying.

Very few root crops, cabbages, chile, corn, squash, greens, and apples were dried or stored in 1938, whereas after the program began in 1939 an average of 87 pounds were dried or stored for winter use; in 1940, 334 pounds; in 1941, 336 pounds, and in 1942, 336 pounds. As a part of the program most of the families had added good food storage rooms to their houses and had learned to store products never before eaten during winter. In 1942 the families were producing about 70 per cent of the value of the food they consumed.⁷ Their

⁷ So far as production is concerned the farm and home supervisors both stress the use of various insecticides in the control of insects attacking orchards, gardens, and crops. The people had seldom used these before and produced only a few things which were more immune to disease and which would produce seeds for the following year. When the program is discontinued in the village it will be important to observe how many drop back to this practice. Probably many will.

diets were much better and they had grown and preserved few things they did not like.⁸

Originally the little fruit available was produced by a few old trees which were badly cared for. Now 28 of the families have orchards. All now have poultry and hogs whereas 35 families reported no hogs when the program began and those who had chickens did not have many. At the beginning of the project only 6 families had milk cows as compared with the 36 now who have sufficient fresh milk for cooking and table. As for range cattle, 266 head of cattle were pasturing on the 26,400 acres of communal grazing land bought by the USDA. Not to be underestimated is the accomplishment of the families in freeing themselves from the necessity of purchasing feed for their livestock. In 1938, before the program began, all families had to purchase some feed. In 1939, 46 bought feed; in 1940, 27; and in 1941, 7. In 1942 all raised the feed they needed.

2. *Increased Income.* The net worth of the 50 families participating in the program⁹ when it began was calculated at \$393. Now it is calculated at \$929. Thus \$32,558 was granted to these families during 1939 through 1942 and their net worth was increased by \$26,794.¹⁰ In addition \$12,500 has been loaned and \$4,560 repaid. No loans were outstanding. In view of the fact that these people had for centuries lived more or less in a subsistence economy and had little knowledge or appreciation of money and its uses, this accomplishment is all the more significant.

Of course, the war has made it difficult to appraise the results of the experiment. Families which were previously on the margin or actually dependent now consider themselves fairly well off because they receive incomes from sons in the armed forces (one man received about \$150 per month) or from war industries or work such as they find in mines opened by the war.¹¹ Of the original 50 families which participated in the program 12 are away (June 1943) having left their land in the care of relatives. These families will all return with considerable cash savings to invest in their homes and farms. Many are already making such investments. Thus the average cash incomes of the 50 families at

the time of the beginning of the program was \$135. At the close of 1942 it was \$827.

Originally 12 per cent of the income came from crops and livestock and most of the remainder was from relief or WPA wages. Now only 6.7 per cent of the total income is from crops and livestock, the remainder coming in large part from work off the farm. This means that the people have dropped back to the old pattern which the program was designed to change. However, since these incomes are in large part being invested in the homes and farms they may perhaps be considered as supplementing the rehabilitation program provided they make the families more independent. Considerable of the money is going into livestock to be pastured on the community grazing project. If the project is continued the present incomes may accomplish what the governmental funds would have been used for. Other villages do not have this opportunity to build toward independence because irrigated land is not available and purchase of usable acreages large enough to run enough livestock to support a family is almost out of the question.

Though still small the increase in cash income from crops and livestock from \$16 before the program began in 1938 to \$50 in 1942 should not be underestimated. In 1938 only 8 reported having cash farm incomes, whereas 21 reported them in 1942.

3. *Accomplishments in Sanitation.* All participating families and the community house are now supplied with modern sanitary privies built by the WPA, the materials being furnished from project grants. The villagers also have cooperative wells which free them from the necessity of drinking ditch water, the source of water before the project was begun. Also, all windows and doors of the houses of the villagers have been screened. This, as in the case of the wells, was accomplished by labor furnished by the people and materials furnished by project grants.

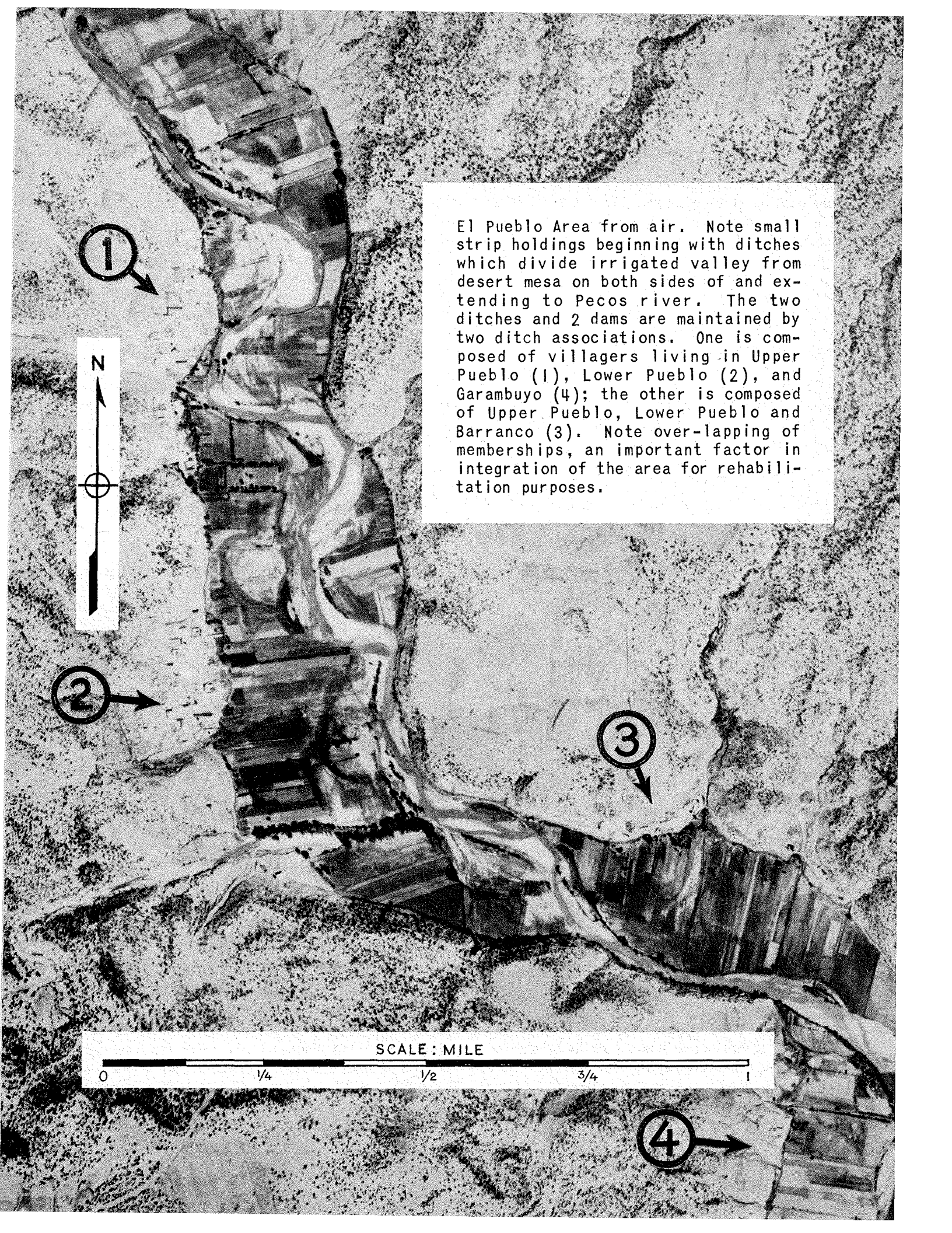
4. *Accomplishments in Medical Care.* The project supervisors have facilitated their health program by urging local health authorities and the peo-

⁸ Sauerkraut, conserved the first year, was an exception and not put up afterwards. The people preferred to store their cabbage.

⁹ Thirteen others could not enter the program because they were not eligible farm families.

¹⁰ In 1940 grants were distributed as follows: 36.04 per cent for food; 15.59 per cent for clothing; 19.84 per cent for farm operation; 7.33 per cent for cooperative farm activities; 9.26 per cent for household materials; 9.29 per cent for medical treatment and 2.68 per cent for personal items.

¹¹ In June, 16 boys were in the armed forces, 13 men and boys were engaged in war industries, 12 were working in mines, and 13 were doing outside farm labor.



El Pueblo Area from air. Note small strip holdings beginning with ditches which divide irrigated valley from desert mesa on both sides of and extending to Pecos river. The two ditches and 2 dams are maintained by two ditch associations. One is composed of villagers living in Upper Pueblo (1), Lower Pueblo (2), and Garambujo (4); the other is composed of Upper Pueblo, Lower Pueblo and Barranco (3). Note over-lapping of memberships, an important factor in integration of the area for rehabilitation purposes.

SCALE : MILE

0

1/4

1/2

3/4

1

pleto cooperate. This has resulted in 95 per cent of the people being immunized for typhoid, all children vaccinated for diphtheria and small pox and the administration of 97 Wasserman tests and the 8 positive cases found treated. Besides, women were given instructions in baby care, nursing, and prenatal care. The school children were given physical examinations and several tonsillectomies performed and a number of eye diseases remedied. Through the San Miguel County Medical Association, sponsored by the USDA, 12 cases of female trouble were corrected and until the present year, when the doctors decided not to participate, families were furnished complete medical treatment, drugs, and hospitalization for the annual payment of \$28.

5. *Accomplishments in Developing Leadership and Cooperation.* All the way from greater cooper-

ation between members of one "larger family" to inter-village cooperation, great strides have been made. It is natural for closely related Spanish-American families to cooperate in various ways, but for village and inter-village cooperation there was far less precedent. To be sure, there were the so-called ditch associations and grant boards (see appendix) which served as a framework. But the introduction of the community center (described below) with all the associated activities is a significant accomplishment in breaking down "feuds" and teaching new habits in "living together." As a natural result of forming these new associations, village leaders were groomed to run them. The supervisors conscientiously "took a back seat" as much as possible. At the present time the villagers are increasingly learning how to run things themselves.

VI STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

As previously stated, the rehabilitation program before the initiation of the El Pueblo experiment had failed to reach the poorest subsistence or non-commercial farmers. The program had for the most part been confined to the rehabilitation of single families who were a relatively good risk as borrowers. No attempt had been made at a comprehensive over-all rehabilitation of village communities. The El Pueblo project attempted to accomplish this.

There were four stages in the development of the project. For the sake of convenience these have been called: I. Preliminary arrangements. II. Development of confidence by individual attention. (First year of operation of program, 1939.) III. Organizing and instituting the program in community groups. (Second year, carrying on through to the present.) IV. Extending the program to the region. (Last two years of the program.)

STAGE I: PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

1. *Origin of the El Pueblo Experiment in Village Rehabilitation.* In localities where cash incomes were negligible, supervised loans, the central feature of the rehabilitation program were out of the question. Because one of the largest groups of subsistence farmers lives in the Spanish-speaking villages in the Southwest, it was logical that one of the first experiments in the rehabilitation of non-commercial farmers should include one of these villages. As previously stated the general objective of the experiment

in the rehabilitation of the non-commercial farm communities was to determine methods whereby intensive supervision in farm and home management, supplemented by a grant and loan program could make dependent non-commercial farm families independent. The experiment thus combined the family and the village-community approach.

2. *Choice of Personnel for Intensive Rehabilitation Work.* In order to have some standardization among the experimental areas in the various states, the case load which was to occupy the entire attention of one man farm supervisor and one woman home supervisor was set at approximately 50 families. Each regional director was requested to choose the supervisors from among his staff which could do the most effective intensive rehabilitation work among the non-commercial farmers. For the Spanish-American area, an Anglo who could speak Spanish and whose ability to work with Spanish-speaking people had been demonstrated in extension work in the Philippine Islands and in the rehabilitation program in the Southwest was placed in charge. As home supervisor a Spanish-American was chosen who had grown up on a farm and had lived all her life in the area, had served as rehabilitation home supervisor three years in Northern New Mexico, and who was well trained in home demonstration work and adult and child education. These two worked as a team for the first three years after which the farm supervisor was promoted to administer a rehabilitation program

in the region of which the El Pueblo project was a part. His successor was retained only one year when, because of the personnel shortage occasioned by the war, the original home supervisor began carrying both home and farm supervisory work.

3. *Choice of El Pueblo.* The El Pueblo area was chosen as a typical community in which to start the experiment after a reconnaissance survey of the villages of Rio Arriba, Sandoval and San Miguel counties was made. Finally when it was decided that San Miguel county afforded the most conveniently located villages for the project, the farm and home supervisors were instructed to gather farm data in 21 villages in this county. They and the regional USDA authorities finally decided that El Pueblo, composed of four villages irrigated by two ditches should be chosen as the community best fitted for the experiment. The four villages, Upper Pueblo, Lower Pueblo, Barranca, and Garambujo, because of the separation of the villages offered some difficulties from the point of view of developing an integrated over-all community program. However, they were unified to the extent that the people thought of the area as a unit, referring to it as El Pueblo and, more important, because they worked together in servicing and managing the irrigation ditches and dams. The community consisted of four villages and included 63 families, 50 of whom became participants of the program because they owned land. In most of the important aspects the villages resembled El Cerrito,¹² a village some 12 miles to the east which, to assist in administration of action programs, had been studied intensively by the United States Department of Agriculture and whose characteristics are referred to later in this report when the results of the experiment are generalized.

STAGE II. DEVELOPMENT OF CONFIDENCE BY INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

Gaining Entree into the Community. The supervisors having previously worked among the Spanish-speaking villages, knew that outsiders cannot establish themselves by claiming they are government officials or other professionals or that they represent this or that established authority. All strangers except members of the priesthood must establish themselves through personal contact with the villagers themselves and those local leaders in whom

they trust and to whom they turn for advice. It was, therefore, fortunate that the supervisors were freed from certain of the restrictions generally imposed upon rehabilitation supervisors.¹³ At the outset the leaders of the community were approached and the plan was explained to them. Two of the more progressive leaders, one, the storekeeper, favored the plan and argued for it. It was also explained to the local priest and teachers.

After the house to house investigation of social and economic conditions had been analyzed, the plan was explained to the people in a general meeting. Before this meeting the people manifested suspicions and many feared that the plan would turn out to be to their disadvantage. Some talked to the local priest about it. Several older people continuously counseled against the project. One old woman, who since the death of her husband has operated her own enterprise with her sons would give no information about her place and told others that the supervisors were "out to get the land for the Texans."

The farm and home supervisors explained the program in Spanish, but the people were not told that El Pueblo had been chosen as the site for the project. Rather they were told that, although only one community would be chosen, several were being considered. It would be left to the people whether they wanted the experiment carried on in their community. After the speakers had been heard, the people asked questions about the program. At the end of the three-hour meeting they were told to think it over and decide before the next meeting. Each family was given a blank on which were to be listed the family's composition, farm experience, and a report on the previous year's business giving their resources and debts and other data. According to instructions these applications should be signed by the husband and his wife.

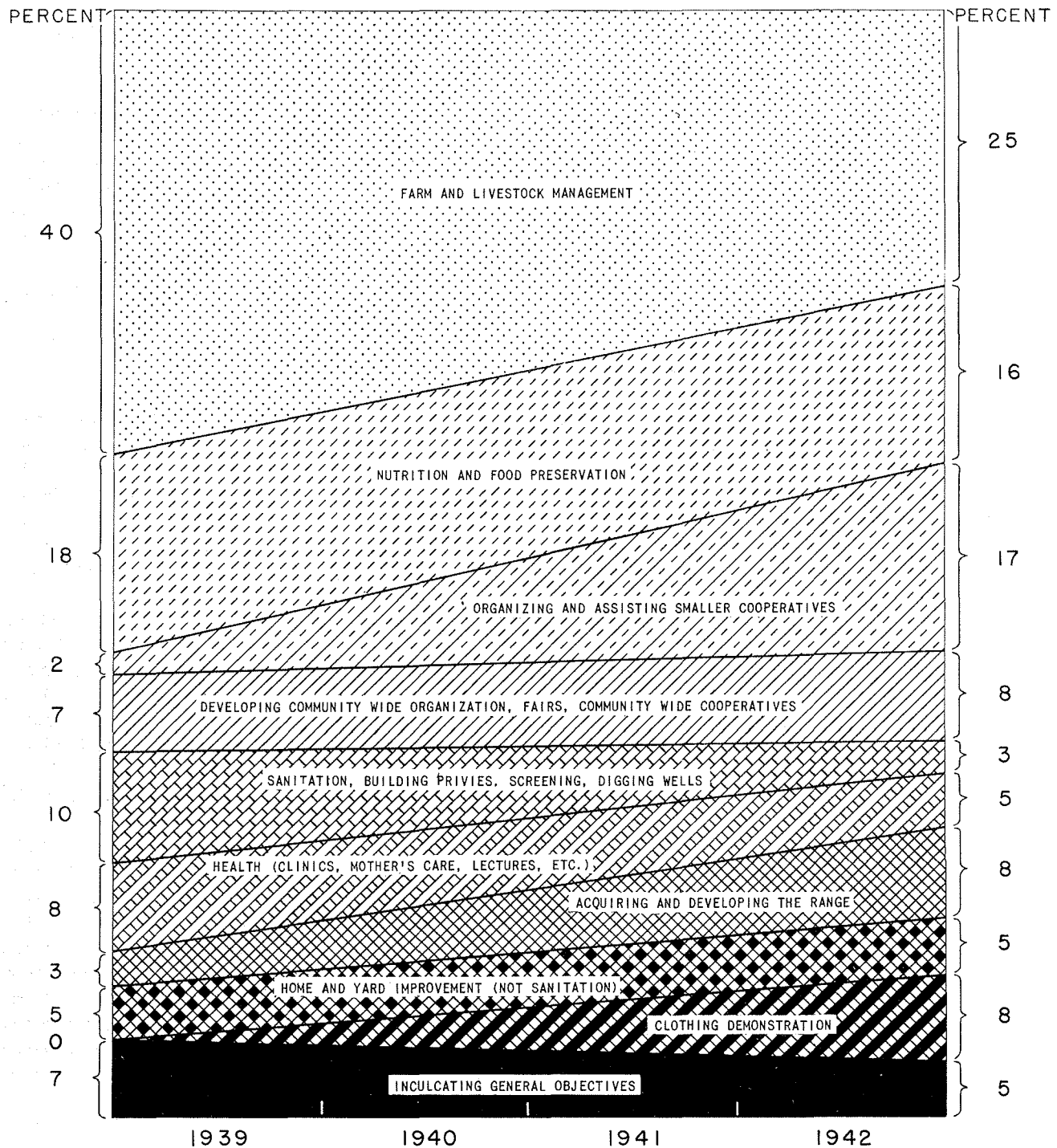
An Example of the Importance of Symbols. The blanks were in English and carried the bold face title "Application for Rehabilitation." This caused a storm of protest and anxiety. Actually the word *Rehabilitation* caused difficulty most of the first year. This was because the original Federal Emergency Relief Administration had at one time required that the people sign personal notes upon receipt of relief. Although some of the officials who gathered these notes told the people that signing was a "mere

¹²Olen Leonard and Charles Loomis, *Culture in a Contemporary Rural Community, El Cerrito, New Mexico*, Rural Life Studies, 1, BAE, USDA, Nov. 1941.

¹³The best short description of the duties and functions of supervisors will be found in the *Supervisors' Guidebook*, USDA, 1942.

Figure 4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL WORKTIME OF FARM AND HOME SUPERVISORS, EL PUEBLO EXPERIMENTAL AREA, 1939-42



formality" and that the notes would never be collected, the Rehabilitation Division of the FERA later tried to collect. The supervisors spent much time attempting to explain what rehabilitation meant. Even though the notes had to be paid they had nothing to do with the USDA and its program of rehabilitation. At the second mass meeting, the definition of the word was read from the school dictionary in an attempt to show the people that rehabilitation did not mean an agency to collect notes which were due. Fortunately, because of the above mentioned leniency granted these special supervisors, the people were not required to sign these applications. Also in place of the rather complicated farm and home plans in English, the supervisors were allowed to substitute a simplified plan in Spanish on which the word rehabilitation did not occur. All husbands and wives signed these agreeing among other things to: (1) Follow a plan of planting and improving the farm by rotation of crops and application of manure. (2) Buy poultry, a pig and a milk cow and manage them in accordance with instructions of the USDA. (3) Improve their houses, keep farm and home accounts, produce and preserve vegetables, fruits, meat, eggs and milk products and adapt a balanced diet. (4) Construct necessary farm buildings, fences and wells. (5) Plant a garden of from 1/4 to 1/2 acre in size and manage this in accordance with the recommendations of the Agricultural Extension Service.

Supervisors worked with each family explaining the details of the program and assuring them that these were things that would be accomplished over a period of years. The plans helped to make the program concrete and as they were signed they gave the impression that all persons involved were serious and meant business. One of the aspects of the program that appealed most to the farmers was the possibility of obtaining better seed, especially alfalfa seed. Also they hoped for a river control program. These general plans should not be confused with the plans that were worked out individually with each family by the supervisors every three months.

General Methods Employed. During Stage I the supervisors spent about three-quarters of their time working with individual farm families. (Fig. 4.) The heart of the program was intensive supervision backed by a grant program. The supervisors made every effort to elicit cooperation and avoid giving the impression that they were using the grant program as a "big stick." Nevertheless, their being able to withhold grants for food and clothing and other things in cases of lack of cooperation placed them in an advantageous position considering the peculiar social

structure of the villagers. This will be discussed later. Here it must be emphasized that, although there might be the implication that the program rests upon the premise, "You make these specified improvements and you will receive these grants and assistance -- if you do not, you may not receive additional grants," the supervisors used praise, "jolly-ing up," and rewards more than they did sanctions. In the cases of the suspension of grants the matter was referred to the Community Council before decisions were made.

During the second stage of the program the sanction of the community came to have more and more significance, and the supervisor used less personal pressure. As a large part of the grants were used for food and clothing during the first years, the effect of being suspended from the program is readily seen. However, the supervisors believe that the above-mentioned continuous sympathetic assistance and praise were more important in attaining results than the fear of suspension from the program. As the people learned the objectives and methods, they developed a sense of justice concerning for what one should be rewarded and for what one should be penalized. This was very important.

Overcoming Resistance. Even this "person to person" approach met with great resistance in all phases of the program. The peoples' fathers and grandfathers before them had followed the present practices and they were good enough for them. Many were convinced that good breed stock, "fine" stock as they called it, would eat too much or die too easily. Even after farm management records showed that wheat planted with a small horse-drawn drill yielded more, many claimed drills were inferior to broadcasting because of the 5 inches between the drilled rows. Arguments to the effect that correct depth could be more easily attained with a drill were to no avail. Some who thought the chili was wilted by the sun would not hoe out the weeds when told that the weeds did more harm than good and that disease and salts in the water caused the wilt. The old farmers, the patriarchs in this society, offered the greatest resistance.

The supervisors did not try to argue a great deal with those who opposed them. Rather they used "infiltration" techniques. When the highest yield in the village resulted from a combination of (1) better seed, (2) better prepared soil (3) better planting with the cooperative drill, and a given farmer had failed to use one of these means of increasing his production, he was told that his yield was low on account of that lack. If he didn't believe this, he

soon found that he was about the only one clinging to the old practice, and that actually his yields were lower because of this. The supervisors attempted to avoid putting villagers who were slow to change in the position of "saving face" when they changed. This was important because people usually resist change. If they become the vocal exponents of a status quo position they fear a loss of position in the group when they give up the old for which they are fighting.

Thus B. Gomez had a piece of alfalfa on uniform land. In the spring he was induced to spread fertilizer over one portion. Before the second cutting, that part of the field on which fertilizer had been applied had a very much heavier growth than the other part. The farm supervisor mounted clumps from both fields on a large cardboard and with no preliminary explanation passed it among all the men at the community meeting asking them to estimate how much the two clumps would yield per acre. He averaged the different estimates on the blackboard. By simple arithmetic he demonstrated that for all cuttings at least a ton increase per acre for that year would be realized. As the people had bought hay at \$12 per ton and the fertilizer had cost \$4 per acre, the practice was adopted by several of those who had comparable land and had to buy feed.

In Stage I the person to person infiltration technique naturally worked best when the real leaders could be induced to improve their practices first. However, sometimes changes came about in a different way. In one case one man whom few respected raised a fine crop. Everyone saw it and many said, "That must be a good idea if anyone dumb as Old ----- can make a good crop with it."

In the demonstration of canning and other home management practices the approach was also individual at first, even though the demonstrations were carried on in homes attended by small familistic and congenial groups. All were provided with pressure cookers and the women made more effort to obtain their quotas of canned goods than the men made to reach their production goals. It is probable that the rearrangement of the gardens from scattered rows of a few items to well cared-for plots in which many varieties of food were grown was largely the result of the desires of the women and their food program.

Dispelling Relief Psychology. During the first stage of the program, the supervisors continually reminded the clients that it was not a relief program, but the idea was not easily dispelled. After it had been in operation some time a client told the supervisors his grant had not been sufficient because he

had had to use some of his own money to buy clothes. Obviously, rehabilitation cannot proceed when such attitudes prevail.

Although it was difficult to instill the idea that grants were not relief but were rewards for practices which would make people independent, it was more difficult to get the people to see how the program would eventually free them from the necessity of seeking outside employment. How they would be able to compete with the big livestock enterprises through the organization of cooperative enterprises was not clear to them. Nevertheless the supervisors continually extolled the idea of the cooperative as the only manner through which the people might operate sufficient pasture to give them their needed cash income. They were impressed with the fact that their forefathers through the grant boards had originally controlled the surrounding grazing land and that the ditch associations were successful cooperatives of the nature anticipated. They were beginning to do things more cooperatively long before the second stage in the development of the project had ended.

STAGE III. ORGANIZING AND INSTITUTING PROGRAM IN COMMUNITY GROUPS.

Cooperative Tools and Wells. Since the "larger family" system prevails among the Spanish-Americans in the Southwest a natural basis for cooperation among related families and their friends exists. (See Appendix for discussion of this.) Garden planters, grain drills, plows, and other simple agricultural equipment in addition to two small home laundries were purchased by these small groups in the various villages. One of the most difficult undertakings of these small groups was the digging of cooperative wells, to free the people from the contaminated ditch water. As it was necessary that one family grant space for the well and agree to allow 2, 3, or 4 neighbor families to use the wells considerable skill was required to get satisfactory arrangements made for digging them. Finally 12 new cooperative wells were finished and 3 old wells repaired by the various groups. As in the case of the early home demonstration groups, the families were allowed to determine their own work groupings and the Department of Agriculture furnished the materials. Although the Spanish-American villages are notorious for their factions, these small cooperatives function with a minimum of friction.

This does not mean that it is an easy proposition to establish larger cooperative structures. It has long been known that, merely because a

society is composed of powerful family groupings does not necessarily mean that it will support strong, large scale cooperative structures.

Community-wide Action. Important as these small family and friendship cooperatives are they are not large enough to operate community ranges under supervised management. The supervisors, therefore, were confronted with the problem of welding the four villages into one cooperative unit. Such a unit would also facilitate the other programs which required equipment such as the orchard spray, threshing machine, and mill which could be used by the whole community. For this reason and because no other suitable building was available the supervisors began to work for a community house early in the program. This was finally finished by the villagers, the Department of Agriculture furnishing the material which cost approximately \$600. This is the pride of the people of the community, a sort of symbol of its unity, the center of all kinds of demonstrations, fairs, meetings. It is the storehouse for the community carpenter tools, and there the women can and store the food for the school children's hot lunches. The supervisors are agreed that it is the most important single agency in the total program.

So far as the community-wide program is concerned the controlling agency is the Community Council consisting of a president, vice-president and a secretary-treasurer elected by popular vote of the people. This Council appoints the following committees: (1) Community House Committee, (2) Committee for the Beautification of the community, (3) Committee on Recreation, and (4) Committee for the Improvement of the Farms and Livestock. These officers and committees arrange for the two most important project meetings: The October fair and fiesta and the February meeting for the election of officers and the working out of farm and home plans. The Community Council functions under a constitution adopted by the community.

The El Pueblo Grazing Project. The other organization which promises to become of great importance in the life of the community is the El Pueblo Livestock Association, which, through its elected Board of Directors, works with the range rider in the control of the affairs of the range and the cooperative bulls. In 1940 a unit of 26,400 acres of grazing land located about 7 miles from El Pueblo was purchased by the USDA at the cost of \$36,244 and development work including fencing, erosion control and water conservation structures was begun which cost approximately \$44,000. This work offered an important source of income to those villagers who participated.

In June 1943, the villagers in the El Pueblo project were pasturing 266 head of cattle in the Grazing area. They were paying the USDA 25 cents per month per head, but it is proposed that when their Livestock Association is ready, the land will be leased to it with the prospect of eventual sale. At present the range is under the management of a range rider hired by the USDA at a salary of about \$100 per month. Since the original plans for an independent community calculated that each family should have approximately 10 good beef cattle and since the families are now buying these and already have an average of about 5 head, some progress is being made. However, no one knows at the date of the present writing what final disposal will be made of the land the USDA owns. If it is sold back to the "Anglo" livestock interests, the hard won confidence of the villagers will be dealt a serious blow.

Although considerable community consciousness has developed in El Pueblo and although the people work together in the two Ditch Associations, it will take considerable supervision for them to become skilled enough to operate as large and complicated a business as will be involved in the management of 26,400 acres of range land which has been purchased and developed for them. Here as in other villages, feuds of long standing between various groups may break out unexpectedly and time will be required for the establishment of routine range and breeding practices which will minimize the number of, and facilitate the making of, group decisions.

STAGE IV. Extension of the Program to a 10-county Region. Toward the middle of the third year (1941) the farm supervisor was requested by the Department of Agriculture to prepare a report of plans for the rehabilitation of the hundreds of Spanish-speaking villages in 10 counties in North Central New Mexico. Most of these villages were suffering from the same needs as was El Pueblo, and the report presents the following information: In the area 73 per cent of the farm families had farm incomes in 1940 under \$400. In terms of the irrigated acreage, the only really effective agricultural area, the rural population has a density of some 500 per square mile. All community services were at a minimum but about 6 per cent of the farms owned 82 per cent of the land. One county, for example, with 13,898 people and the large area of 3,811 square miles had only one doctor.

In developing the regional programs, the importance of cooperatives in the solution of the problems of the natives was emphasized and through

the county and home supervisors over 200 have been organized. Grazing lands have been purchased which the villagers through livestock associations might manage and stock. Although no communities

are being given the intensive supervision which the El Pueblo community received, rehabilitation procedures in this larger area are much influenced by the lessons learned in the El Pueblo experiment.

VII LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

The history of the stages in development of the program is in part reflected in Fig. 5, which shows the distribution of work time of the two supervisors. This time chart, a rough approximation, was compiled to show the history of the remedies and methods used to inaugurate the remedies. Various trends are highlighted, such as the increasing importance of developing cooperatives, of developing the range in contrast to the decreasing importance of work on sanitation, etc.

Although the program is too new to determine the extent to which the long-time objectives can be attained some tentative generalizations based upon the experiment can be made. The people must be conscious of the need of such a program or it will not succeed. This principle will not be discussed further here because it is related to others which follow.

A. THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CONDITIONS OF THE PEOPLE AND THEIR FELT NEEDS.

Bench Marks and Plans. The economic and social data gathered at the beginning of the study enabled the supervisors to develop their plans and to measure their accomplishments. Such data are indispensable to a project of this kind. They enable both the rehabilitation agency and participating families to appraise progress and evaluate practices.

A health nutrition survey should have been made in each village before the program was launched. As unhealthy people without energy cannot be expected to do the hard work required to rehabilitate themselves and since it is known that these people suffer from ill health and high death rates, the health program must be launched early. However, if the people are infested by intestinal worms, as was found to be the case when a recent investigation was made in one of the villages in the county to the north, the wells, screened windows and sanitary privies would not solve the problem. Unless there is grave danger of epidemics it would be better to delay undertakings which require pressure until the people have worked in an effective campaign

which will lead them to initiate the action. The people appear not to have a sufficiently felt need for wells. For instance, there are now indications that when the wells are out of repair the families will return to the ditches to get their water. As the people were vaccinated for typhoid and as few cases of dysentery were known in the village the well digging program which required the penetration of about 15 feet of hard rock and considerable danger through the use of explosives might have been postponed. An argument to this effect is presented by the fact that recently the health authorities reported the wells to be contaminated. After chlorination most of the people refused to use the water and again dipped it from the ditch and river. This experience argues in favor of single farm demonstration and experiment units to determine practices. One well dug and tested for a year or so would have enabled the supervisors to determine future action.

This is a good example illustrating the importance of working on felt needs on the one hand and of making needs felt on the other hand. The good rehabilitation and extension workers recognize the importance of working on both aspects of the problem. Before planning rehabilitation projects the felt needs and the other factors which prevent the attainment of objectives must be known.

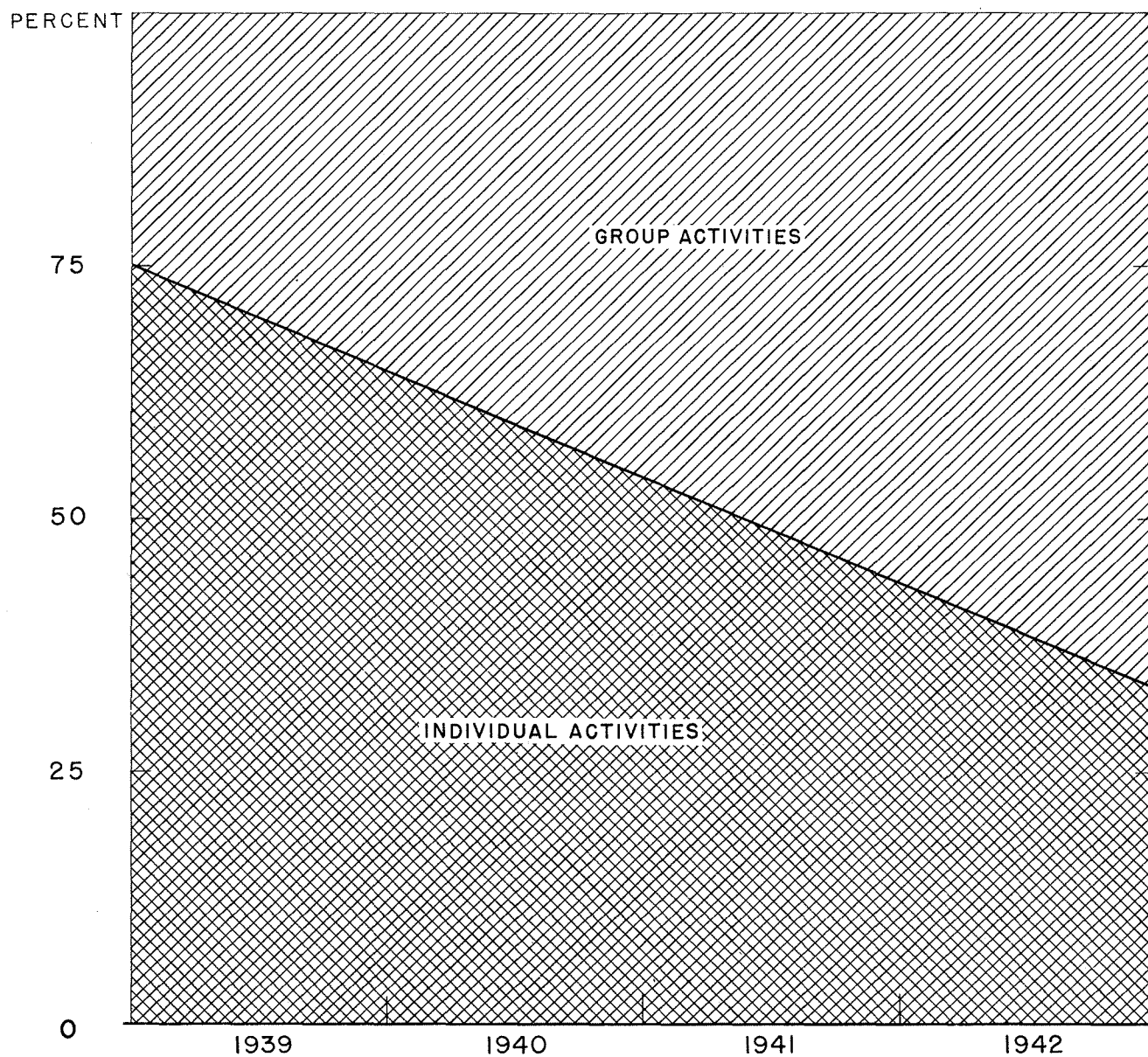
B. THE NECESSITY FOR WELL WORKED OUT REMEDIES.

1. *Inaugurating Tested Remedies.* The above example likewise illustrates the importance of first testing out and locally experimenting with remedies before inaugurating them wholesale.

2. *Regional Plan for Governmental Agencies.* An over-all regional plan for a larger area will facilitate extension and rehabilitation. This should be accomplished through the cooperation of the action agencies working in the area and the people jointly. The plan should be put into effect by some coordinating agency with local representatives. Many examples from the El Pueblo experiment could be cited to illustrate this. Thus, when the project was first

Figure 5

ALLOCATION OF WORKTIME OF FARM AND HOME SUPERVISORS
AS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES WITH GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS,
EL PUEBLO EXPERIMENTAL AREA, 1939-42



started families were loathe to give up their WPA jobs for fear that they could not get other employment. But since the program was a farm program, it was difficult to certify them for work on various construction projects because, by entering the program, they place themselves outside those who were by regulation entitled to these jobs. Some over-all plan should have existed for the area so that these families could have participated in it. For instance their own privies had to be built by those certified for WPA work, and since many could not certify because they were supposed to be in the rehabilitation program and be receiving grants they had no part in building their privies but had to get work elsewhere, in some cases on other governmental projects. It was difficult for the people to understand the logic of such regulations.

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration also helped the villagers of El Pueblo. The plans which they developed for the improvement of their fields and for which some received as high as \$60 annually were sometimes at variance with the plans developed by the farm supervisor and the client. Usually the AAA officials and the supervisors worked together on the plans but this was a personal arrangement between these officials and when plans by the two agencies were at variance this fact made it more difficult for the supervisors to establish confidence in the project.

All Other Agencies. Such a regional plan should include all local agencies, especially the schools. In El Cerrito, a village not far distant, teachers were attempting to teach students, who had difficulty understanding English, the problems of transportation in Boston, Massachusetts. Since the teachers of the area are well paid compared to the standards of other states, there is no excuse for such backward educational practices which are not related to the regional problems. A regional plan would determine what to do in the instruction of language. Now, although Spanish is the home language, the children do not speak or write it well because it is not supposed to be taught in the schools. They do not learn English well enough in most cases to master the subject matter. All realistic plans for rehabilitation must con-

sider the language problem because it lies at the root of the difficulty of communicating new practices.

Such a regional plan must decide the issue as to whether the people are to be made independent farmers.¹⁴ If they are to be, existing large ranching agencies must be displaced. If they are not to be, work programs for the development of the region should be projected. As resources such as coal, hydro-electric power, various minerals, and other natural resources are available for industries which could use the labor of the villages, the possibilities of industrial development should be investigated.

3. *The Technical Aspects of the Plan.* Technical equipment and resources for the accomplishing of the objectives must be made available on a basis which is economically feasible. The available land in most villages is capable of producing crops and vegetables which would be greatly improved by the application of better practices even without supplying additional equipment. However, the Spanish-American villagers, possibly more than some peasant peoples who do not have livestock and other alternative incomes from outside labor, require some simple mechanization. Even though time were available to spade the whole farm, few will do it. Plows must be made available and other simple equipment. Fortunately the cooperative patterns of the people make the purchase of simple tools and their use practical. The experiment has demonstrated this fact. Since cooperation by larger families and their friends has always been carried on, the basis for small equipment cooperatives is established, but this does not mean that larger undertakings should begin without adequate preparation.

4. *Techniques and Practices Must be in Accordance with the Culture.* Obviously small changes in old practices, other things being equal, are easier to make than are great changes in these practices or the introduction of new practices. The supervisors found that it was important to work on things which produced tangible results and did not require great changes in habits. Improved drying or dehydration of fruit and vegetables was easier to incorporate in the practices than canning of sauerkraut because the

¹⁴ Any agricultural group, the members of which at regular intervals leave their farms, is difficult to rehabilitate because the longer-time plans cannot be carried through and lessons learned are easily forgotten. At El Pueblo some families practically abandoned their newly acquired poultry flocks, livestock, improved homes and fields for the high wages in war industries. They will all return to rundown homes and farms and will have forgotten the new practices they had learned or were in the process of adopting. In developing plans for the rehabilitation of the villages of this area these facts should be taken into account.

people have for generations dried food but they have never preserved or eaten sauerkraut. This principal is too obvious to stress further.

5. *The Program Should Unfold, not Strike as a Bomb Shell.* After the study of a village has revealed (1) the activities most needed and (2) the activities which because of the habits and attitudes of the people can be most easily carried on, the units of work to be undertaken should be arranged in order of priority. Much careful planning is necessary to accomplish this. This order will change as the program unfolds, but care must be taken that while several things are going on, the people are being prepared for that which is to follow. If the stage can be set so the people can themselves request these activities, so much the better. It is better for the people to be anxious to accomplish a few things than for them to have a hazy idea about many coming events. As in the case of the baseball fan, it is easier to keep the batter, the man on the bench and the man in the hole in mind than it is to keep the whole batting line-up in mind.

Rehabilitation supervisors and extension workers, who attempt to work on such a wide front as that of making a dependent village independent, must be careful not to confuse the people by talking about too many objectives and launching too many activities at once.

Also in planning such a project the supervisors must remember it is for the villagers, not tourists who will never use what they see. The people should not be made to think they are guinea pigs. The farm supervisor at El Pueblo specified that he would not take the job if he could not control the "official" traffic to the village. As it was, the people resented some unsympathetic visitors. Other USDA projects near large cities have afforded their clients no more privacy than fish bowls do their inmates.

C. CONCERNING THE INTRODUCTION OF THE REMEDIES.

1. *The Supervisors Must Work With the Social Structure as They Find It. The Church:* The supervisors are agreed that, other things being equal, intensive rehabilitation projects should be started in villages where the local priest will give active assistance. No other single individual can be of so great aid. At present in Taos County the local priests are indispensable in the development of the Health Cooperative. In programs of this type the supervisors and other officials can gain the confidence of the people quickly if the priests lend their support.

The supervisors at El Pueblo are agreed that they could have allayed suspicion and established themselves much more quickly if the priest had more actively supported the program. He did not oppose it but even after his bishop became enthusiastic about the work which was being accomplished and told the local priest to give the supervisors all possible assistance he remained indifferent.

Supervisors must learn the social alignments in the community and get the leaders, who are usually the old men, to cooperate. Grouping families and larger groups in such a manner as to avoid aggravating old feuds or causing new factions is a part of the supervisor's everyday work.

2. *Both the Sanctions and Rewards of the Group Must be Used.* The close personal consultation of the supervisors coupled with their praise and "jolly-ing-up," explain in large part the success of the experiment. The effectiveness of this approach grew greater as these professional supervisors gained increased status in the community because of their technical ability and friendly understanding.

The approval of the community council grew to be an important factor for encouraging participation in the program. Thus when a supervisor told A. Romero he must be an expert sprayer otherwise he would not have such a fine crop of cabbage so free from insects, this really had significance when Romero knew that the members of the Community Council were likely to hear about this achievement. It had even more effect when he was told that if he kept up the good work his cabbage might win the prize at the community fair. After some community products selected by the supervisors won county and even state prizes, the people had more confidence in their own and the supervisors' ability and they had a means whereby they could express themselves in terms of community achievement. Then a situation favorable to good extension and rehabilitation work was gained.

3. *Gaining and Retaining Confidence as Related to the Larger Organization.* For supervisors to maneuver themselves into positions of confidence so that their competence as supervisors can bear fruit, a situation must be created whereby programs can be developed without any chance that regulations from officers higher up will prevent these supervisors from fulfilling their promises. The program at El Pueblo was greatly handicapped when this principle was violated. Thus the people were promised work on the Grazing Project. Groups were to rotate for periods of three months. After the plan had been explained to the people and several groups had

earned their wages working in this manner a Washington order made it necessary that Civil Service status be given to employees before they be hired. And employees who were already hired could not be discharged. Naturally those who had not had their turns at the work and who had had their farm and home plans budgeted with this expectancy were very much disconcerted. It so happened that the new farm supervisor was attempting to establish himself when this order arrived. He never overcame the stigma of this situation because the people blamed him, not Washington. The villagers think and work in terms of personalities, not governmental agencies and principles. This program was also handicapped when the Grazing Project changed from the jurisdiction of the Rehabilitation Division to the Management Division because it was purchased and the Management Division was supposed to handle lands which were purchased.

4. *The Cooperation of the People Must be Elicited on a Voluntary Basis.* The rehabilitation program for needy families can carry elements of compulsion in that supervisors are in positions of power having the authority of holding back grant money necessary for food and clothing if recommended practices are not carried out. However, the importance of this factor is easily overemphasized because the successful supervisors are those who get the people to do things (a) because they lead the people to want the results which come from doing these things or (b) because the people like the supervisors so much that they do not want to disappoint them by not following recommendations. The former stimulus is more important than the latter but through the whole experiment the praise and sympathetic assistance furnished by the supervisors to individual clients was very important. The supervisors are convinced that these things were more important than whatever element of compulsion the program carried.

5. *The Supervisor Must Establish Himself as a Professional.* It is highly important that the rehabilitation supervisor and extension worker obtain the confidence of the people on the grounds of his or her professional competency. The farm or home supervisor must know and prove that he or she knows the answers to the technical problems with which the farmer and his wife must deal. In addition, he must be liked by the people. As the villagers say, he must be "simpatico." They must not take favors or become "beholden" to the people; on the other hand they must remember their objective is that of making the people independent. This means that they

must not let the people become beholden to them. In this culture, effective supervisors can easily slip into the role of *patrones*. For example, the farm supervisor, before coming to El Pueblo, was often introduced by the villagers in Rio Arriba County where he was a supervisor as "Mi patron." He attempted to prevent the people from making him a real patron by insisting that they make their own decisions when possible.

6. *Demonstration Familiarized.* Model demonstration units located in the villages would have helped the supervisors put across their programs. Such units should be operated by villagers and not government officials or people receiving outside pay who are expected to do exceptional things. In some cases, teachers who live in the community could cooperate in this work. The more such demonstrators are a part to the community the more effect the work will have. Of course, this holds for the supervisors themselves. The supervisors think that if they had lived in the villages and their families had actually become a part of the community, they could have speeded up the accomplishment of objectives.

7. *The Piecemeal vs. the Comprehensive Approach.* As the community rehabilitation proceeded, the advantages of the over-all planned approach manifested themselves. Previously the Health Department had vaccinated some of the people and there had been an attempt to organize 4-H clubs. Similarly, most of the other programs had done various unrelated things to or for the people. But these unrelated individual attempts at assistance produced few lasting results. On the contrary, in the comprehensive plan a thorough and related series of activities were carried out to help the people satisfy their own manifold needs. These interrelated and coordinated activities promise to produce lasting results. For instance, some have said, "We would almost die rather than be without plenty of canned food during the winter again." The comprehensive approach, in short, proves the axiom that "the whole is greater than its parts."

8. *Village Community Approach vs. Individual Family Approach.* With this final conclusion we come perhaps to the most important lessons learned. The El Pueblo experiment has demonstrated the importance of social organization in extension and rehabilitation work. Previously, the supervisors in New Mexico had worked through individual families which had occasionally been organized into cooperatives. With El Pueblo, an important innovation was introduced. Increasingly the supervisors worked with larger groups. (See Fig. 4.) The village structure

was used to lengthen the hand of the individual supervisor. The ditch associations, the small family-friendship cooperatives, the church and all the organizations of the community were used to implement the rehabilitation and extension program. To use an analogy, the supervisors used the "handles" in

the villages which would multiply the results of their efforts. When "handles" were not available they created them. In this sense the Community Council and the Livestock Association were handles which the supervisors helped forge to increase the effectiveness of their program.

APPENDIX

APPLICABILITY OF EXPERIENCE TO REHABILITATION OF OTHER SPANISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Of course, some of the conditions confronted by the supervisors in the village of El Pueblo were peculiar to the village, others peculiar to the Southwestern part of the United States and still others characteristic of Spanish-American communities in our sister American Republics. The need and poverty of the people was great just as it is in most of the rural villages in Latin America and other widespread Spanish-American characteristics are described below. The significance that these characteristics have for the administrator will be pointed out.

Attitudes Toward Money. The Spanish-speaking groups were relatively isolated during the long period of the development of what is called modern capitalism or modern commercial and industrial enterprise. While Anglo-Americans were disposing of various vestiges of feudal and communal land tenure systems the Spanish-Americans held most of their grazing lands in common. Living for centuries outside the realm of money economy they cannot be expected to manifest the same attitudes toward money and the various aspects of money such as interest. Those Anglos who claim the Spanish-Americans

are not thrifty are usually not conscious of the longer experience their own group has had in the use of money and its manipulations. However, all these differences are relative.

Attitudes Toward Use of Time. Somewhat related to the difference in the desire to save or knowledge concerning the manipulation of capital goods is a peculiar attitude toward the use of time which has been described by many students of Spanish-American culture.¹⁵ Those sympathetic to the Spanish-Americans call them "graceful livers." Those who are not sympathetic may condemn them as "lazy." One scientist attempting to be more specific and objective has characterized the Spanish-American culture as possessed of a "Mañana Configuration," meaning that there is less tendency to discount present enjoyments for future security or pleasure.¹⁶

Peculiarities in Social Structure.

1. *Peon-Patron Relationship.* First there is a certain submissiveness resulting in a willingness to permit, without question, both church and lay dignitaries to determine individual action. There seems to exist a sort of potential peon-patron relationship in lay affairs and in other matters the *padre* or

¹⁵ See Charles P. Loomis, "Hard Work and Thrift Among the Spanish-Americans," Harvard University Library Manuscript. Here the author stresses the importance of the inherited occupation. Peasants usually work harder than nomadic peoples who must idle away much time while sheep or cattle graze. The cultural traditions of the provinces of Southern Spain where the sheep culture prevailed has no doubt had its influence upon these people. See Julius Klein, *La Mesta*, Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1936.

¹⁶ Florence Kluckhohn, "Los Atarquenos, A Study of Patterns and Configurations in a New Mexico Village," Radcliffe College Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge, Mass. 1941.

priest and his council is accepted with less questioning than is the case in comparable situations in Anglo-American culture.¹⁷ These differences in social structure must be taken into account in any attempted extension or rehabilitation program. Thus in New Mexico where decades of isolation and intermarriage has almost completely wiped out so-called don families, investigators have commented upon the ease with which the government relief agencies and their officials come to play the role of *patrones* in the lives of the people.¹⁸ Extension and rehabilitation workers must continually keep this fact in mind just as they must realize that inherited status and age generally are accorded relatively great status.

2. *The Importance of the Family.* Fig. 5 was drawn in an attempt to indicate the interdependence of the families in El Cerrito, the village nearest El Pueblo on the Pecos River. As stated above the study of El Cerrito¹⁹ was made in part to assist in planning rehabilitation projects such as the El Pueblo project. The two villages are so similar in their social and cultural aspects that it seems advisable to draw on the El Cerrito study to describe those aspects of the family which are peculiar to the Spanish-American culture in the Pecos Valley of New Mexico. Here the family is the basic channel through which all organized activities must flow. The success of any organized activity depends largely upon the degree to which it fits into the pattern of the family group.

In Fig. 5, the families are represented by circles placed on the map with more regard to frequency of visitation and to degree of consanguinity. The original geographical location is completely disregarded. The degree of consanguinity is indicated by a symbol inserted in the middle of the line describing the frequency of the relationship.

Isolation from the city markets and stores has made it necessary for these families to resort to considerable borrowing and lending. This applies particularly to items of food. In case a family should use its supply of flour or lard before a ride to town can be arranged for, it is obliged to borrow. These loans are strictly, if informally, kept account of. Such courtesies could not be lightly regarded. They are repaid promptly after the first trip to town.

Borrowing and lending among the villagers is not limited to items of food. Farming tools and equipment are loaned freely. Brothers may buy tools together or they may buy different tools for the purpose of exchange. It is uncommon for several distinct families to own jointly or severally only a single set of farm tools.

Fig. 5 describes the frequency of the loaning of farm implements. Kinship ties stand out. Harvests are usually family affairs, the division of which is quite informal. For instance, in the case of families 3, 4, and 13, the father owns practically all the equipment. All work is done in common. There is a common wood pile, common barns, and common storage of crops and food. The son-in-law who owns most of his own equipment (family 1) and family 10 deal with this larger family chiefly through the head (number 4). However, family 19 deals directly with one of the sons (number 13), who owns some equipment in his own right. Other larger groups are more complicated. There is both common and pooled property. In the larger family, including the smaller families, 9, 6, 20, 10, and 11, the smaller families own so much equipment individually that no larger ring is drawn about them. There is much borrowing individually from the brothers even though the mother, no. 9, owns most of the land and resources. Groups A, C, and D function in a more communal manner, although in each of these groups there is considerable ownership of and exchanging of implements by separate families.

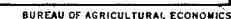
Significance for Administrators. The fact must be borne in mind that it is the larger family of grandparents, children, and grandchildren with which the schemes should deal. This is clearly demonstrated by the preceding charts. To remove a single smaller family would frequently create hardships and in addition would increase expenditure for frequent visits back to the village. Smaller families than those which include the grandparents and the families of the sons should seldom be considered for resettlement in a new location. If the daughters' families, uncles, aunts, nephews, and nieces, and in some cases, cousins could be part of the group to be removed so much the better. In many cases the parental family would not even consider leaving the family of the daughter. Small familial rehabilitation

17. This is called the "Patron Configuration" by Kluckhohn. *Op cit.*

18. See Olen Leonard and Charles P. Loomis. *Op cit.*

19. *Ibid.*

**FAMILIES
LOANING FARM
IMPLEMENTS,
EL CERRITO,
NEW MEXICO,
1940**



cooperatives composed of several related families have been successful in their effort to rehabilitate. Thus it is important that action agencies know the importance of familism in this culture. Such knowledge will always argue in favor of rehabilitation in places where feasible. In such rehabilitation these familistic patterns of cooperation, can, when directed by skilled supervisors and agents, facilitate the programs.

Formal Associations. Since the rehabilitation program in El Pueblo in many of its most important aspects requires formal organizational structure to support various cooperative activities, the experience of the people in cooperative endeavor should be appraised. By far the most important formal social organization in the Spanish-speaking villages is the church. The importance of this agency and the importance of eliciting the cooperation of the priest in extension and rehabilitation work has been emphasized.

Any priest who is interested in improving the technical agricultural practices of the people can, because of the position he occupies in the social structure of the villages, accomplish in a few months what it would normally take others years to accomplish. However, it is only an occasional priest who goes far into such worldly matters as the improvement of agricultural practices and organization of cooperatives. The success of the cooperative movement in Nova Scotia indicates what an enlightened priesthood might do for the poor villagers of Spanish-speaking Southwest. Until such a movement begins within the church, however, the burden of rehabilitation and extension will be carried by governmental and other agencies. If these agencies desire to assist the Spanish-speaking people, they must elicit the support of the church in order to make the most of their programs.

Ditch Associations. Although there are some writers who maintain that the strong paternalistic family and church systems, such as those of the Spanish-speaking villages in the Southwest, make it difficult to organize large democratically controlled cooperative structures, these villagers have already demonstrated that they can operate such organizations.

In most Spanish-speaking villages in the river valleys of Northern and Central New Mexico the Ditch Association is the most important secular formal organization. Before the Department of Agriculture began its rehabilitation program in El Pueblo there were no farm organizations there.

The one local cooperative enterprise is an old one. Its function is to clean, repair, control, and maintain the irrigation system. No one knows how old the association is, but it has probably been in existence since the valley was first settled.

Each family owning or operating land in the valley is eligible for membership. There are no cash fees or dues; instead, it is maintained through contributions in labor. The officers of the association are a ditch boss or mayordomo and three members of a ditch committee. The duties of these officers are well defined. The ditch boss is expected to inspect the main ditch at regular intervals and to call out the men when repairs or other work need to be done. He supervises the annual cleaning of the ditch, his only compensation being that he does not have to do any of the actual labor himself. The members of the ditch committee make any new rules for the regulation of the association and see that the old ones are enforced. It is their duty to distribute the irrigation water according to supply and need. These officers are elected each year at a meeting of the entire village. In many villages the offices carry considerable prestige but in El Cerrito this is not true despite the responsibility attached to them. They are considered rather a duty and are passed around equitably.

This association functions with a high degree of efficiency. One hundred per cent cooperation is demanded and usually given. Severe reprisals are certain in case of failure to cooperate. A violation of the code of the association may mean suspension of water rights or heavy penalties in the form of labor. No one dares remain away when the ditch is being cleaned, unless he is able to send someone to represent him. Labor is contributed in accordance with the area of land operated.

These Spanish-American Ditch Associations furnish the longest continuous cooperative experience available in American agriculture. Like the cooperative butcheries among the French in Louisiana, however, they have come to be governed more by custom and tradition than by the rational decisions reached by frequent group discussion which characterize successful modern cooperatives in Anglo farming communities. Nevertheless, these cooperative experiences put the New Mexicans at an advantage over the sharecroppers of the South or the mountaineers of the Appalachian Highlands and Ozarks. It is an important factor in rehabilitation and extension work. Too many cooperative ventures failed because they were launched among people

who had no cultural heritage in the democratic operation of formal organizations.

Grant Boards. In terms of organizational experience, the importance of the administration of the land granted either by the Spanish Crown or the Mexican Government should not be underestimated. Usually the small holdings of irrigated land and buildings came to be held as private property²⁰ but millions of acres of grazing land was granted and held in such a manner as to necessitate group control ownership and operation. In some cases several villages came to operate one huge grant through a Grant Board or Grant Commission elected from among the villagers who are co-holders.

Although most of the lands once held by the villagers through their elected officers have been lost for reasons previously mentioned, some units are now being administered efficiently. In not all cases in which the Boards lost the land was the loss due to mismanagement. As F. W. Blackmar writes: "The original holders of land have lost most of their holdings either through the misjudgments of the courts and commissions or else by evil intrigues of Anglo-Americans, especially the latter. The Mexican has been no match for the invader in business thrift and property cunning."²¹

Where several villagers have worked together in the administration of their grazing lands

they may furnish a larger unit for the administrator for grazing associations or other cooperative endeavor. As stated by one USDA report, "These systems of community use are interesting in their suggestions of a mechanism by which resources made available to the native population may be efficiently and effectively managed and used."²²

Summary and Conclusions Concerning the Applicability of the Lessons Learned in the El Pueblo Experiment.

The administrators of relief, rehabilitation, extension, colonization, and resettlement programs in Latin America can benefit from the lessons learned at El Pueblo. Although there is a wide variation in the cultures of the various countries there are many common elements. The field supervisors and agents must work through the networks of strong family leaders. The church and the church leaders must not be ignored. Anglos who work in Latin America should realize that their own attitudes toward people and toward things may differ from those they encounter in Latin America. All of these alleged differences are relative but no good administrator or field representative will overlook them.

SUCCESSFUL AGRICULTURE WITHIN THE RESERVATION FRAMEWORK

by

William O. Roberts¹

Some 35 families of Indians living in a community known by the picturesque name of "Red Shirt Table," on an Indian reservation in South Dakota, have shown that it is possible for an impoverished Indian group to achieve self-support, and to meet the demands of modern society.

Ten years ago, this community was almost completely without resources. In a region where livestock farming is the major economy, they were almost without livestock of any kind -- in an area where drought hazards made agriculture a precarious occupation, they were without irrigation facilities.

²⁰ Even in the case of these smaller tracts, the Spanish-speaking people have failed to understand their rights and duties as property owners. Because of inheritance divisions resulting in double registration, some pay double taxes. In other cases unknown to the people property deeds have passed to the State for failure to pay taxes. For other complications see T. T. Reid, "The Taos County Project," Univ. of Mexico, Bul. No. 381, Sept. 1, 1942, p. 6.

²¹ *Spanish Institutions of the Southwest*, Frank Wilson Blackmar, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1891, pp. 327-328.

²² Olen Leonard, *op. cit.*

¹ Superintendent, Pine Ridge Reservation, Pine Ridge, South Dakota.